HECKMONDWIKE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Full Governing Body Minutes

Time & Date:	5.00pm – Wednesday 3rd April 2025
Venue:	In school
Governors Present:	Michele Brooke (MB) Derek Cross (DC) – Chair Nick Cockerill (NC) Mark Tweedle (MT) David Hall (DH) Sue Doubell (SD) Nicky Stokoe (NS) Matthew Pinder (MP) Lalit Surywanshi (LS) Mohammed Hans (MH)– virtual Jonathan Hodgson (JH) Peter Roberts (PDR) – Headteacher
Non-Voting Attendees:	Nicky Thomas (NLT) - Deputy Headteacher Richard Tipler (RGT) – Deputy Headteacher Natalie Loxley (NJL) – Finance Director Simon Taylor (SAT) – Assistant Headteacher (first part) Jody Dunn (JDN) – Clerk
Meeting Quorate:	Yes

1. Welcome & Apologies

DC welcomed all to the meeting and instigated around the table introductions for the benefit of new governor Nick Cockerill. He advised the board that NC had attended his first F&R meeting the previous week and made a great contribution, bringing a fresh pair of eyes on things.

Apologies were noted from Ross Oxby and Keith Wilson.

2. Declarations of interests – None.

3. Safeguarding, Attendance & Behaviour update

SAT firstly thanked governors for taking the time to complete the refresher safeguarding training, before advising of the audits that have recently taken place; the single central record audit and a safeguarding audit as suggested by governors. He advised that he had not yet had the feedback from this, but would feedback to governors as and when he did.

SAT then highlighted the new and updated information in the report. Governors raised questions around the spike in persistent absentees and the significant rise in suspensions and detentions. SAT responded to each, providing further information and context. Further discussion was had around the suspensions and detention and the analysis that has been done around any particular groups affected. PDR added that he had recent discussions with other grammar school heads with regards to this, and advised they are all seeing similarities.

MP noted he a couple of small questions around the report but would email them over as they did not warrant a group discussion.

Governors thanked Simon and he left the meeting.

4. Minutes of previous meeting, sub-committee minutes and matters arising

FGB 11.12.24
DC made reference to the points MT had raised prior to the meeting. JDN advised she would amend the wording of the minute of item 9 to include the phrase 'the majority of governors voted to remove reference to 25% criterion'.
The actions of the minutes were noted as complete and the minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting, subject to the points raised by MT.

C&S 13.03.25
In the absence of KW, DC noted he would take the minutes as read and asked if anyone had any questions. NJL noted that the questions and answers asked for at the meeting were now in C&S folder should anyone want to see them.

F&R 19.03.25
JH thanked NC for his input at his first meeting and gave the board an overview of the discussions and advised that NJL had already began to address the actions.

PDR gave the board an update on the current budget position as a result of the actions undertaken in response to this year's deficit budget and governor instruction to make some savings. He advised that it had been a difficult time for all involved, but the situation was now resolved, largely due to voluntary solutions from staff, therefore no compulsory redundancies were necessary. PDR advised that the trade unions had been really helpful throughout the process and had informed him many schools had already been through a similar process.

It was noted that there was an action regarding the reserves policy missing from the actions; JDN confirmed she would add this.

5. Executive Summaries

PDR opened the floor to questions on any of the executive summaries.

JH asked about the complaint highlighted in the school community report, to which PDR confirmed it had now resolved. He also asked about the GDPR breaches, to which NJL confirmed both were low risk. On the same report, a discussion was had around the large number of trips that are taking place, with governors questioning the impact these are having on teaching. PDR noted that this increase is on his radar and the SLT are reviewing the processes etc, but noted that exam periods are always avoided. He added there was a big push on trips post-covid, however the increase has been significant.

Governors then raised questions on the admissions and appeals report, both around the new admission to come through the fair access process and the wording under the entrance exam provider update. Explanations were given to both. Governors asked how many appeals had been submitted to date, with PDR advising it was the usual number by this point in previous years.

Moving on the HR summary, DC questioned the movement in operational staff, to which PDR gave an explanation and context to each. NSE raised the number of staff referrals to counselling services since the last meeting and asked if this was something to be concerned about. NJL noted there were no themes or trends in these referrals, all individual and personal circumstances.

Finally, a discussion was had around the careers and progression report, covering work experience placements and the Gatsby criterions.

6. School Development Plan

PDR noted the updated front page as a result of governor comments at the last meeting and again, opened to governor questions.

NC noted that this was the first time he had seen the plan and therefore had some points and questions with regards to its make-up. A lengthy and robust discussion was had around the plans' categories, sub-categories, functionality and design. Further discussion was had around its various objectives, outcomes and actions, with PDR explaining how the SLT use the document and how they find it a very useful and workable document. NJT explained the processes of measuring the impact of action and the QA processes in place.

A discussion was then had around the more long-term objectives, with some governors noting that they feel the more long-term strategy and vision for the future of the school hasn't been looked at by governors for a while. Governors agreed it would be a good idea to add this as an agenda item at the next meeting.

Governors then asked questions regarding various points of the progress/actions in the plan regarding best quality of education, best practices and the marketing plans for the senior common room.

DC concluded the item by reflecting on the useful discussions had, and that he believed the plan was a very good operational document.

7. Governor School Visits Update

MP – Pupil Premium
MP gave a summary of his most recent PP meeting and what was discussed etc. He noted this was an outstanding area of the school and that Megan (responsible for PP) should be congratulated on her exemplary work and great practice. This will remain an annual meeting as there are no concerns.

MB – Sixth Form
MB gave an overview on her visit surrounding the sixth form review, carried out by Ofsted inspector Liz Creswell. She relaid many of the conversations she had had with Liz and James, the Head of Sixth Form and noted it was a worthwhile and beneficial exercise. She proposes to visit again next term and get some student voice.

MT – House Art Final
MT advised that he had been into school earlier in the week to judge the House Art Competition. He advised that a great event it was and the amazing talent of students. He noted these events reinforce the importance of House System and suggested the governing board write to the House staff to congratulate them. All agreed that this was a great idea.

A robust discussion was then had around the importance of the house system and the roles that come with it and the time rather than money that comes with it. PDR noted this is often discussed and raised by the staff, however given the budget cuts etc it is not possible. Governors noted this seems a little contradictory given the importance, however are fully aware of the need to save money.

8. Policies for approval

Complaints Policy
Governors suggested several amendments to the policy mostly around inconsistencies and the order in which stages come. NJL noted the changes and advised she would feed them back to be amended before bringing back to governors for approval. MT raised that the policy should also include a sentence that advices the process can be adapted to support disability etc.

SEND Information Report – Approved

SEN Info – Approved

Accessibility – Approved

9. AOB

JDN advised governors of the skills audit feature within Governorhub and where to find it. She asked they governors complete the form by the end of the month to allow time to analyse before the next meeting.

MT asked for the school to circulate safeguarding report via Governorhub once available so they can review.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Actions		**Who**
1.	Update the last meetings minutes and actions to reflect governor comments (F&R & FGB)	JDN
2.	Add strategic item/ long term planning to next agenda	JDN
3.	Write a letter to congratulate House Staff	DC
4.	Make suggested amends to complaints policy	NJL

Governance Requirement: Minutes signed as true and accurate record of the meeting.	
Signature: Derek Cross	Name: Derek Cross Chair of Governors